

Congressional Closeup by Kathleen Klenetsky

House passes tough South African sanctions

The House voted up a bill June 18 that, if made into law, would slap on a near-total U.S. economic boycott of South Africa, beginning in 180 days.

The sweeping measure, endorsed by voice vote, would require the withdrawal of all United States businesses and American investment in South Africa. Such a move, say well-informed sources, could precipitate a retaliatory South African embargo of essential strategic mineral exports to the United States.

Crafted by Rep. Ron Dellums, a super-liberal California Democrat with close ties to the Institute for Policy Studies and other radical left organizations, the bill contains much harsher provisions than the legislation that House members were originally scheduled to vote on, a sanctions bill sponsored by Rep. William Gray (D-Pa.)

The Dellums measure calls for a total trade embargo between the two countries. It would also deny landing rights to South African airlines, and permanently ban the import of gold Kruggerrand coins. Additionally, it would cut off the flow of strategic minerals from South Africa, except those required for U.S. defense.

Opponents of sanctions did not actively oppose the Dellums measure, claiming the bill is so draconian, the Senate would never consider it seriously. Rep. Mark Siljander (R-Mich.), a leading foe of sanctions, declared right after the House vote: "Sanctions are dead."

But House Democrats are jubilantly predicting that the Dellums bill is going to significantly step up the pressure on the administration to ac-

cept new punitive measures against the Pretoria regime.

"It sends a great message to the President . . . and to the nations of the world," House Speaker Tip O'Neill (D-Mass.) gloated. Bill Gray asserted that while the Dellums bill has virtually no chance in the Senate, there would now be "irrepressible pressure" on the Senate to agree to some form of sanctions

In an 11th-hour attempt to head off sanctions legislation, National Security Adviser Adm. John Poindexter had sent a letter to House Minority Leader Robert Michel (R-Ill.), stating that the administration had "grave misgivings and strong opposition" to any sanctions initiatives.

That concern was emphasized by White House spokesman Larry Speakes the day after the Dellums measure passed. "We believe that legislation of this type would erode our capacity to promote negotiations in South Africa and would likely further separate an already divided society," said Speakes.

Senate mobilizes against the SDI

Thirteen U.S. Senators, all of whom voted for the ABM treaty in 1972, sent a letter to Reagan June 18 expressing continued support for the Kissinger-negotiated accord.

The letter also called for the United States to comply with the "strict interpretation" of the treaty, a reading, the signers say, which would prohibit some of the major directed-energy programs now being pursued by the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization.

The letter was released by the Na-

tional Campaign to Save the ABM Treaty, an umbrella organization headed by SALT negotiator Gerard Smith, which coordinates anti-SDI operations both in and outside Congress.

Terming the ABM treaty "an important contribution to American security," the letter states that when the Senate approved the agreement, "it understood that the treaty prohibited the development and testing as well as deployment, of all space-based and other mobile-based ABM systems and components, regardless of whether they use 1972-era or new technologies. . . ." The senators add: "We believe that this clear meaning of the treaty is crucial to its viability as a valuable agreement that promotes American security."

According to an accompanying press release, this would mean that "new technologies such as lasers and directed energy which are being developed" under SDI are banned.

Signers include: Mark Hatfield (R-Oreg.), Alan Cranston (D-Calif.), Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), Lloyd Bentsen (D-Tex.), Quentin Burdick (D-N.D.), Lawton Chiles (D-Fla.), Thomas Eagleton (D-Mo., Mass.), Charles Mathias (R-Md.), William Proxmire (D-Wisc.), Robert Stafford (R-Vt.), and Lowell Weicker (R-Conn.). The press release also quotes Gerard Smith praising the senators' action.

In mid-June, the Senate Armed Services subcommittee on strategic nuclear forces—slashed \$800 million out of the administration's \$4.8 billion budget request. On the House side, Armed Services chairman Rep. Les Aspin is predicting that Congress will freeze SDI funding at this year's level

of \$2.8 billion. The members of the House Armed Services Committee, he says, rank SDI as a low priority.

Meanwhile, two more senators—Bill Bradley (D-N.Y.) and “conservative” Orrin Hatch (R-Utah)—have added their names to a widely publicized letter demanding that SDI funding increases be kept to a maximum of 3%. That brings to 48 the number of Senators who have endorsed this 50% cut in the SDI budget, a cut which SDIO officials say will effectively kill the effort to develop an anti-missile defense.

Moynihan expresses love for McNamara

Chest-thumping “neo-conservative” Pat Moynihan, a favorite of the oh-so-conservative *Commentary/Washington Times* crowd, took a few moments away from his liquor cabinet the other day to issue a diatribe against President Reagan for abandoning the unratified, Soviet-violated SALT II treaty.

The New York Democrat let Robert Strange McNamara, the man who almost singlehandedly destroyed the U.S. military during the 1960s, do his complaining for him. Moynihan inserted into the June 10 *Congressional Record* a commentary McNamara had penned for the *New York Times*, in which he ranted that Reagan’s dropping of the treaty “will, unless reversed, severely harm U.S. security interests.”

McNamara also insisted that none of the many documented Soviet violations of SALT II and other arms treaties is “militarily significant.”

Moynihan termed McNamara’s pro-Soviet outpouring “cogent and

patient,” adding that should the United States decide to break out of the ABM Treaty as well, “we shall have lost.”

Lost what, Senator?

Congress trembles at Mexican debt crisis

The possibility that Mexico may soon declare a moratorium on its huge foreign debt, is sending tremors through various financial and political power centers, including the U.S. Congress.

Representative David Obey (D-Wisc.), chairman of the Joint Economic Committee, announced June 19 that his panel has scheduled hearings for June 24 that will focus on the debt crisis in Ibero-America in general, and Mexico in particular. Key witnesses include Robert Lorenz, a West Coast banker, and Norman Bailey, who wants to “solve” the debt crisis by forcing Third World countries to sell off their economies to foreign investors in exchange for debt relief.

The reason the hearings are being held now, a JEC staffer confided, is the prospect that “Mexico may do something more radical than Peru” to deal with its debt problem. “The perception is widespread that [Finance Minister] Silva-Herzog was ousted because he wanted to be very conciliatory. . . . He wanted to do things that would make the banks happy. . . . My sources tell me there is a large faction in the Mexican cabinet that wants de la Madrid to declare a debt moratorium. The situation in Mexico is very ripe for something like that to happen, and we have to be prepared.”

The JEC issued a report May 10 warning that the Baker Plan represents a totally inadequate response to the debt crisis. It stated that if the United

States were not able to come up with something more palatable to debtor nations, the possibility of their taking “more radical, unilateral actions” could hardly be avoided. It appears that their worst fears may soon come true.

Tales from the dark side

● *EIR* hears that Sen. John Warner’s (R-Va.)

nephew of Prince Johannes Thurn und Taxis, a Bavarian oligarch who wants to plunge the world back into feudalism. Thurn und Taxis titillated West Germany gossip columnists in early June when his young, punkster wife Gloria presented him with a birthday cake that bore 60 marzipan penises in lieu of candles. . . .

● London sources report that Sen. Joe Biden (D-Dela.), one of the many Democratic presidential hopefuls littering the Washington scenery, spent several days in May at a Bahamas retreat where he was given a strategic-policy retooling by several as-yet unidentified “strategic experts.” Maybe this has something to do with the fact that Biden subsequently took the point in the Senate campaign to reinstate the disastrous SALT II treaty, and to gouge SDI spending. . . .

● Senator Al Gore (D-Tenn.) has been delivering a speech against the SDI every day for two weeks, retailing the usual discredited canards against the program. Rumor has it that longtime Soviet agent-of-influence Armand Hammer has had a hand in Gore’s anti-SDI temper tantrum. Hammer, of course, is a business partner of Gore’s father, a former U.S. senator.